

**METRIC**

**A-A-20193B**  
**April 21, 2008**  
**SUPERSEDING**  
**A-A-20193A**  
**February 29, 1996**

## **COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION**

### **ONIONS, BULB, READY-TO-USE**

**The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description (CID).**

**1. SCOPE.** This CID covers ready-to-use bulb onions (onions) packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by the Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties.

#### **2. PURCHASER NOTES.**

##### **2.1 Purchasers *shall specify* the following:**

- Type(s), color(s) and style(s) required of onions (Sec. 3).
- When analytical requirements are different than specified (Sec. 6.1).
- When analytical requirements need to be verified (Sec. 6.4).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 9.3) or USDA certification (Sec. 9.4).

##### **2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:**

- Good Agricultural Practices and/or Good Handling Practices (GAP&GHP) Audit (Sec 9.1)
- Manufacturer's quality assurance (Sec 9.2 with 9.2.1) or (Sec 9.2 with 9.2.2) or (Sec 9.2 with 9.2.3).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 10).

**3. CLASSIFICATION.** The onions shall conform to the following list as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

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**Types, colors, and styles.**

**Type I** - Fresh (Spring/Summer) *includes but not limited to: Bermuda, Granex, and Grano varieties* 1/

**Color A** - Yellow

**Color B** - White

**Color C** - Red

**Type II** - Fresh (Fall/Winter) *includes but not limited to Globe and Spanish varieties* 1/

**Color A** - Yellow

**Color B** - White

**Color C** - Red

**Type III** - Creole

**Color A** - Yellow

**Color B** - White

**Color C** - Red

**Type IV** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

1/ Not all onion types are available year round

**Style A** - Whole

**Style B** - Peeled

**Style C** - Diced

**Style D** - Sliced

**Style E** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

**4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products shall meet the requirements of the:**

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's assurance (Sec. 7).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 9).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).

## 5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

### 5.1 Definitions.

**5.1.1 Whole.** Onions are mature, firm, single bulb, fairly well-shaped and free from splits.

**5.1.2 Peeled.** The onions outer tough thin layer of skin is removed.

**5.1.3 Diced.** Onions are cut into small cubes varying in sizes from 0.64 cm to 2.54 cm (1/4 in to 1 in) (*unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order*).

**5.1.5 Sliced.** Onions may be sliced perpendicular to the longitudinal axis varying in thickness from 0.32 cm to 1.9 cm (1/8 in to 3/4 in) (*unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order*).

**5.2 Raw materials.** The onions shall be a U.S. No. 2 or better Grade of U. S. Standards for Grades of Bermuda-Granex-Grano Type Onions, U.S Standards for Grade of Creole Onions or U.S. Standards for Grade of Onions (Other Than Bermuda-Granex-Grano and Creole types).

**5.3 Processing.** The onions shall be processed in accordance with Good Agricultural Practices: Guide to Minimize Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~dms/prodguid.html>). Bagged onions are transported to warehouse, graded, bagged or boxed and shipped in accordance with Good Manufacturing Practices (21 CFR Part 110).

### 5.4 Finished Product.

**5.4.1 Flavor and odor.** The onions of any style shall possess characteristic flavor and odor of its onion type.

**5.4.2 Color/appearance.** The onions shall possess good exterior characteristic yellow, red or white color. The onions shall be free from green, white, and brown spots and other foreign material that affect the appearance of the product.

**5.4.3 Texture.** The onions shall be crisp and fairly firm, but not tough, fibrous, or mushy. The onions shall possess a practically uniform texture.

**5.4.4 Temperature.** During transportation onions shall be kept under refrigeration to maintain quality. Unless otherwise recommended the onions shall be delivery at temperatures greater than 0°C (32°F) but not more than 4.4°C (40°F).

**5.4.5 Shelf Life.** Whole onions in a controlled atmosphere shall have a shelf life typically of 30

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days. Peeled onions shall have a shelf life typically of 10 to 14 days refrigerated. Diced and sliced onions shall have a shelf life typically of 7 to 10 days refrigerated.

**5.4.6 Defects.** The onions shall be free from defects which materially affects their appearance or edibility. Presence of any decay, off-color, off-odor, wet sunscald (soft, mushy, sticky, or wet), double and bottle necks and foreign material including but not limited to (metal, glass, wood, paint, or insect parts) shall be cause for rejection of the lot. The onions shall be free from damage caused by seedstems which are tough or woody, or which are more than 0.635 cm (1/4 in) in diameter. Whole onions shall be free from splits, stains, sprouts, and broken fleshy scales.

## 6. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

**6.1 Analytical requirement.** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical requirements for onions shall be as follows:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
<i>Salmonella</i>	Shall be negative
<i>E. coli</i>	Less than 3 per gram using MPN technique (Most Probable Number) or less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram.
Coagulase positive <i>Staph. aureus</i>	Less than 100 per gram
<i>Listeria monocytogens</i>	Shall be negative

**6.2 Product verification.** When USDA verification of analytical requirements are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the following procedures will be followed. Analytical testing shall be performed on a composite sample. The composite sample shall be 227 g (8 oz) prepared from randomly selected subsamples. Subsamples shall be a minimum of one bag of onions and shall contain the appropriate number of onions necessary to yield a 227 g (8 oz) sample when composited.

**6.3 Test portion size.** The test portions shall be derived from the composite sample specified in Sec. 6.2. The test portion size for testing *Salmonella* and *Staph. aureus* shall be 25 g (0.88 oz). The test portion size for testing *E.coli* and *Listeria monocytogens* shall be 50 g (1.76 oz).

**6.4 Analytical testing.** When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analyses shall be made in accordance with the following methods from the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International or as specified below.

<b><u>Test</u></b>	<b><u>Method</u></b>
<i>Salmonella</i>	2003.09, 2004.03, 996.08, 967.25, 967.27 or Section C-7 <u>2/</u>
<i>E. coli</i>	966.23, 966.24, 991.14 or Sections C, D, F <u>3/</u>
Coagulase positive <i>Staph. aureus</i>	2003.07, 975.55, 987.09 or Direct Plate Count <u>4/</u>
<i>Listeria monocytogens</i>	999.06, 995.22, 997.03 or Sections C, D, E <u>5/</u>

2/ Chapter 5, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) or the FDA BAM Online.

3/ Chapter 4, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, FDA BAM or the FDA BAM Online.

4/ Chapter 12, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, FDA BAM or the FDA BAM Online.

5/ Chapter 10, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, FDA BAM or the FDA BAM Online.

**6.5 Test results.** The test results for *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogens* shall be reported as positive or negative. The test results for *E. coli* shall be reported to the nearest MPN or to the nearest CFU. The test result for coagulase positive *Staph. aureus* shall be reported as the number of coagulase positive *Staph. aureus* per gram. Any results not conforming to the analytical requirements shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

**7. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE.** The manufacturer/distributor shall certify that the onions provided shall meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same onions offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

**8. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.** The delivered onions shall comply with all applicable Federal and State mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the onions in the commercial marketplace. Delivered onions shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, and regulations promulgated thereunder.

**9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS.** *Purchaser shall specify 9.3 or 9.4; purchaser may specify 9.1 or 9.2 with 9.2.1, or 9.2 with 9.2.2, or 9.2 with 9.2.3.*

**9.1 Good Agricultural Practices and/or Good Handling Practices (GAP&GHP) Audit Verification Program.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a GAP and/or GHP Audit shall be conducted by trained Federal and/or Federal-State Inspection Service (FSIS) auditors. The audit program consists of one initial audit, and at least one unannounced audit depending on how long the facility is in operation during a growing season. *(The purpose of the GAP and/or GHP Audit Program is to demonstrate that the participating company is adhering to*

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*generally recognized GAP and/or GHP principles. This is a voluntary program established to verify a participant's adherence to the Food and Drug Administration's "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" and does not guarantee a safe product). For further information see section 12.1.*

**9.2 Manufacturer's quality assurance.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer shall be required to provide evidence, by certificate, that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid, or no later than 10 business days from the date of awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

**9.2.1 Plant systems audit.** A plant systems audit (PSA) conducted by USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) or another audit performed by a third party auditing service, and is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food, and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program. The AMS PSA determines the manufacturer's ability to produce under this CID, if the products of interest are identified at the time of the PSA.)*

**9.2.2 Plant survey.** A plant survey shall be conducted by USDA/AMS, or another survey performed by a third party auditing service and is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with 21 CFR 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food Regulations.)*

**9.2.3 Qualified Through Verification (QTV) Audit.** A QTV audit conducted by USDA, AMS, or another Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan verification audit performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of awarding of the contract. *(An AMS QTV audit verifies, at the time of the audit, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 – Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding of Human Food.)*

**9.3 Manufacturer's/ distributor's certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished onions distributed meets or exceed the requirements of this CID.

**9.4 USDA certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the Fresh Products Branch (FPB), Fruit and Vegetable Programs (FVP), AMS, USDA, shall be the certifying program. FPB inspectors

shall certify the quality and acceptability of the onions in accordance with FPB procedures which include selecting random samples of the onions, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official FPB score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, FPB inspectors will examine the onions for conformance to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

**10. PACKAGING.** Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking shall be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**11. USDA INSPECTION NOTES.** When Section 9.4 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification shall include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of onions, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 6.1). When USDA analytical testing is specified, FPB inspection personnel shall select samples and submit them to the USDA, Science and Technology Programs (S&TP) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 10 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

**12. REFERENCE NOTES.**

**12.1 USDA certification contact.** For USDA certification, contact the **Branch Chief, FPB, FVP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, telephone (202) 720-5870, Fax (202) 720-0393, or via E-mail: [leanne.skelton@usda.gov](mailto:leanne.skelton@usda.gov).**

**12.2 Analytical testing and technical information contact.** For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Branch Chief, Technical Service Branch, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-0621 or via E-mail: [Shirleyj.wright@usda.gov](mailto:Shirleyj.wright@usda.gov).**

**12.3 Sources of documents.**

**12.3.1 Source of information for nongovernmental document is as follows:**

Copies of the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877, telephone (301) 924-7077 or on the Internet at: <http://www.aoac.org>.**

**12.3.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:**

Applicable provisions of: the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503 and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199.

These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover/NOVUS and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents on (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800 or on the Internet at:**

**<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.**

Copies of US Standards and Inspection Instructions for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Other Special Products may be obtained from: **USDA, AMS, F&VP, FPB, Standardization Section, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240 or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/standards>.**

Copies of Good Agricultural Practices: Guide to Minimize Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables is available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition on the Internet at: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/~dms/prodguid.htm> .**

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) is available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition on the Internet at: <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~ebam/bam-toc.html>.**

Copies of this CID and the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers, and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from and/or provided to: **Branch Chief, PPB, F&VP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-0102, via E-mail: [FQASstaff@usda.gov](mailto:FQASstaff@usda.gov) or on the Internet at: [www.ams.usda.gov/FQAS](http://www.ams.usda.gov/FQAS).**

Military activities should submit requests for copies of this CID to: **Standardization Documents Order Desk, Document Automation and Production Service, 700 Robbins Avenue, Building 4D, Philadelphia, PA 19111 -5094 or on the Internet at: <http://assist.daps.dla.mil/quicksearch/>.**



**MILITARY INTERESTS:**

**Military Coordinating Activity**

Army - GL

**Custodians**

Army - GL

Navy - SA

Air Force - 35

**Review Activities**

Army - MD, QM

Navy - MC

DLA - SS

**CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:**

DOJ - BOP

HHS - NIH, IHS, FDA

USDA - FV

VA - OSS

**PREPARING ACTIVITY:**

USDA - FV

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